MARVEL

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002

ANDERS
BALÁM
D'AMICO
MILLA

NEW MUTANTS

LETHAL LEGION

NYC sewers.

The dry goods go over here. We'll need a water-filtration system.

Are we sure this is truly necessary, patron?

We'll need someplace deep underground, Zsa Zsa.

We could be down here for years-- decades even-- during the tribulations.

The *mutants* are coming for us.

Mutantkind will take everything we have and expect us to be grateful.

LENTILS
LENTILS
LENTILS

We don't even know how long we have left.

The mutants will be followed by the beast.

The *beast who devours.*

GRRRAAAAAAHH!

What... was that?!

LENTILS
LENTILS
LENTILS

RUN!!!

MEEP!

It's right behind us!

ROaaarrrrr!

I'll try to slow it down!

I dunno what you people are all doing here, but you better get out-- it's not *safe!*

Oh, you'd *like* that, *Wolfsbane.* You *mutants* have come to take what's *ours.*

That's so *hurtful.* We're trying to help!

Morgan, don't bother *arguing.*

I learned long ago, it's a *waste of breath.*

CRRSHKLE

This is exactly what my landlord said my life was going to be like from now on.

Everybody, *down!*

I told you, Zsa Zsa-- mutants are the *harbingers of destruction!*

RARRRGH!

Well, *that* didn't work.

RUN!

[00_Destiny]
[00___ of X]

NEW MUTANTS

LETHAL LEGION

PART TWO

Shela Sexton, A.K.A. Escapade, has been through it. Freshly recruited to the New Mutants, Escapade's first mission was anything but ordinary. After all, it's not every day you defeat a mutant organ-harvesting Sublime and his U-Men with your fellow New Mutant friends...or prevent the prophecy of your best friend, Morgan Red, dying.

But as the dust settled from the young mutants' harrowing adventure, Cerebella soon became overwhelmed with the emotional weight of confronting Sublime, her past kidnapper and tormentor. In an effort to cheer her up, Escapade devised the brilliant plan of robbing the notorious Count Nefaria! With Gabby joining in on the heist, the three -- suited up in fancy disguises -- set out on an (probably ill-advised) adventure.

Meanwhile, Rahne took Morgan "shopping" for tech in the sewers of New York. Besides finding the secret lab of Spencer Smythe, the two were attacked by a massive beastie!

[SHELA SEXTON, A.K.A. ESCAPADE]

[MORGAN RED]

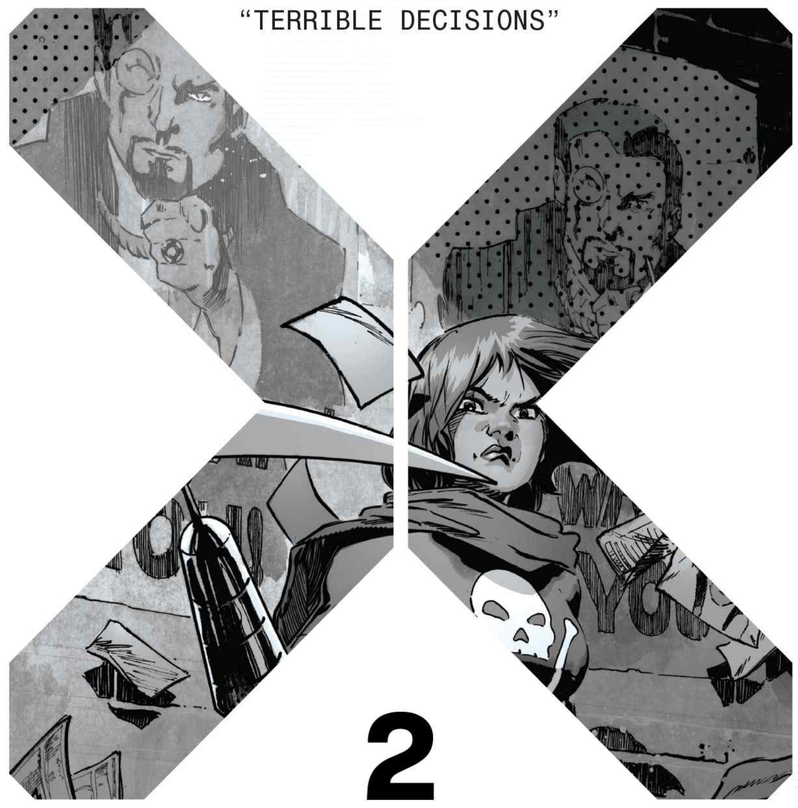
[MARTHA JOHANSSON, A.K.A. CEREBELLA]

[GABBY KINNEY, A.K.A. SCOUT]

[RAHNE SINCLAIR, A.K.A. WOLFSBANE]

[DANI MOONSTAR, A.K.A. MIRAGE]

[XUÂN CAO MANH, A.K.A. KARMA]



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[00_lethal_legion]

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[00_00…02]

Westchester, NY.

This *glitter* will confuse the cameras and any robotic defense systems. Only a pinch--no need to go *full rave!*

I really, really hope this isn't a mistake.

I can't believe I'm getting *heist gadgets!*

This bracelet will mask your body heat. Keep an eye on this jewel: If it changes color, you're in trouble.

I never used to get this nervous before a heist.

This here is the *variegator*-- basically, a fancy lock-pick.

You have the hardest job. All Scout and me are doing is creating a distraction and getting you inside.

I can't stand the thought of Martha getting hurt.

If you run into trouble, don't hesitate to pull the plug.

See that topiary out back? Good cover, with just a few landscapers.

I count four guards. Easy to see why this guy wants to hire more help.

The vault's in the basement, protected by a whole bunch of traps. But there's a goods elevator that goes all the way down from the top floor.

I'm sad we left Jonathan behind. He would have *loved* this.

This *Count* guy didn't count on *us.*

He should have kept his dukes up!

I know she can take care of herself. But robberies always go wrong.

I can't believe I have to be the *responsible one.*

Remember, we need to be extremely stylish ghosts.

And, Gabby, keep the claws sheathed! If he figures out mutants robbed him, it could get *political.*

Today, the two of us are just regular human bruisers.

I've definitely bruised a lot of humans.

Have fun, you guys. I'll see you soon.

But I *do* feel responsible. This was my idea.

Time to get in character. I've been working on my backstory.

BlasterDame grew up on a shrimp boat in the Gulf of Mexico, but her family was kidnapped by Lemurians and she was sent to the fighting pits with nothing but a shrimping knife...

Literally *nobody cares.*

Greetings, everyone!

I am *Count Luchino Nefaria.* Welcome to the tryouts for the *Lethal Legion.*

When I ran the Maggia, we believed that everyone must earn their place, and respect must be won.

The Lethal Legion are not merely colleagues. We are blood siblings, bonded by the shared pursuit of glory.

Whoever makes it through today will become a *legend.*

Hate to admit it, but this guy's recruitment speech is way better than Emma Frost's.

Am I getting cynical? (More cynical?) Mayyyybeeee.

TRANSCRIPT:
COUNT NEFARIA THERAPY

SESSION #37

DR. BENNER: And, of course, your greatest fear is growing old and feeble.

COUNT NEFARIA: Who told you that?

DR. BENNER: You did. In three previous sessions. I have my notes right here.

COUNT NEFARIA: You use my own words to destroy me. You are worse than Tony Stark. I will humor you no more.

DR. BENNER: You're the one paying me. If you want to end our session early—

COUNT NEFARIA: Perhaps I should embrace the inevitable. Buy a nice villa somewhere peaceful, close to the crook of Lake Como. I could listen to opera and enjoy the fruits of my labors. Some days, I yearn to retire. But that would be letting them win.

DR. BENNER: Letting who win?

COUNT NEFARIA: All of them. Doctor Doom, Doctor Octopus, the Sin-Eater. They have humiliated and discredited me in the eyes of the world. Everyone on Earth watched the video in which I mewled for forgiveness, all my power gone. I still have not recovered my full ionic mastery. Now I have become a joke.

DR. BENNER: Let's get back to the villa on Lake Como for a moment. What's keeping you from--

COUNT NEFARIA: They mock me to my face. They take what is mine by right. My own daughter has sided with my enemies. Men who once begged to serve me now shun me. The Living Laser will not return my phone calls!

DR. BENNER: Still, I'd like to see you find ways to break the destructive patterns that--

COUNT NEFARIA: I spend my days locked in endless feuds with the homeowners association in my cul-de-sac when I should be plotting my return to glory.

DR. BENNER: Maybe if you think of this setback as an opportunity--

COUNT NEFARIA: It is decided. I will find a new Lethal Legion. We will raze the entire world if that is what is required. We will clothe ourselves in the entrails of all who stand against us. Terror and devastation like nobody has seen before. I will find a way to repair the damage that has been done to my ionic powers and achieve the godhood that I am owed. Thank you for clarifying my situation, doctor. This will be our final session together. When next you see me, it will be on a pedestal overlooking the teeming mass of humans, all of them chanting my name.

—

Huff Did we make it? Did we get away from the Muck Ness Monster?

Oh, we're not calling it that.

God. I can't believe those jerks. First they blamed us and then they ditched us in the tunnels.

I just want to get out of here and take five showers.

Are we lost?

We *were*. But now I know exactly where we are...

What's wrong?

It's nothing... ancient history.*

Come on. There's an exit this way. I'll buy you a drink.

*See the *X-Men: Mutant Massacre* collection! --S.B.

Sniff

Wait.

These people are *living* down here.

Please leave us alone. I guess you met the patron, but we're not with him. This is our *home,* and we were here *first.*

You really *weren't.*

What *happened* here?

We don't want any troub--

Shhh. It's coming.

Doesn't matter what happened here before.

What matters is we don't let it happen again.

ROaaarrrr

It's coming toward us. What do we do?

These aren't mutant haters this time. They're just... vulnerable people.

We led it here.

So we have to lead it away.

How?! We just barely got away from it last time.

Maybe we need a new approach.

STATEMENT ON THE MUTANT MASSACRE #27

Jared Flyn

Yeah, so I had just moved into the Alley when the massacre happened. THE massacre. I've noticed that nobody says "mutant massacre" or "Morlock massacre" anymore, because there's no need. It's the one we all remember, even after so much death besides. Maybe that's because it was mutants killing mutants? I don't know.

I never felt at home among the Morlocks. You probably ought to be talking to someone else, to be honest. Plenty of others'll tell you the Morlocks were their family or their community or whatever. I just had noplace else to go. Maybe given time, they'd have become my family -- but I wasn't. Given time, that is.

I have the power to create fragrant scents. That's it. I could probably learn how to make nasty smells, for use as a weapon, but I've never wanted to. I was at a magnet school for the arts, studying fashion design, and I would amuse my friends by putting a bouquet in the air. Then my so-called friends told a bunch of other people I was a mutant, and word got around, and my life fell apart. Family, school, security...all gone. I ended up in those tunnels.

For about a day, some of the Morlocks thought it was fun to have me sweetening the air around them, but they soon realized they hated it. You get used to living in a sewer, until someone comes along and makes the air smell nice for a while, and then the stench hits you all over again.

I wasn't one of the first to fall. I heard Greycrow and Riptide gloating, and some of the others fighting for their lives. Then Cybelle, who was one of the ones who was nice to me, was running through the tunnels and yelling for help. The Morlocks freaked out and rushed toward Cybelle's voice, preparing to fight for their home.

I went the opposite direction. I hid.

Felt like hours that I was hiding inside a crawlspace, bricked in like some Edgar Allen Poe nonsense, hearing the screams and smelling fresh corpses. No amount of therapy is ever going to cleanse that memory from my mind. I was shaking and holding myself and trying not to make a sound, as the attackers just sliced through innocent people. Old people, children, everyone. My nostrils were burning and my eyes were overflowing and I felt so cold, so sick. I wanted to throw up.

I lost control over my bodily functions before I lost control of my powers.

They followed the scent of roses, and tore the bricks away. Greycrow smiled at me, but I think it was Riptide who tore me to shreds. I probably died quick, but somehow I still remember the pain.

I woke up here. On Krakoa. They say we're safe, that this is a haven for all mutants. I'll never believe them.

Do you admire my house? It was featured on HGTV *three times.*

The inside is even more impressive. A lucky few of you will see for yourselves.

But first, you must *do battle.*

Hear that, Cerebella? Get as close as you can--

--but we won't be able to let you inside until we win some fights in this guy's empty swimming pool.

Got it.

I'm just enjoying this Savage Land topiary.

Turns out money *can* buy happiness.

My plan is to get defeated right away, and then swap places with one of the winners.

My plan is to *win.*

--So let the battles commence!

The name's Psi-Borg. Spelled with a P-S-I...

So you measure pounds per square inch?

NO, I--

That's *useful!*

BLASTERDAME vs. PSI-BORG III!

Oh! You could have a sidekick named Cubic Foot Displacement Lad!

No, no, I have *psionic blasts*-- see??

I need to lose this fight gracefully.

And *painlessly!*

...

Too late.

Do you just need a moment?

We can go again.

Urrrk--

Stand still so I can melt your *brain!*

BZZZT

Looks like you got some hand-me-down armor.

Am I *winning?* Oh no. Gotta turn this around.

I'm in position. How soon can you get me in?

Working on it.

You seem familiar. Did I break your *face* one time?

It's *Skullbuster,* and she *remembers* me.* Curse my overly distinctive fight banter!

Nah, I'm pretty new. Have you been to Tulsa?

*From *MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE (2022) #1!* --S.B.

ECLECTA vs. FISTICUSS!

I should warn you: I can adjust mass and density *at will.*

I shouldn't warn you at all. Then you'll be *surprised.*

Oh! I'm getting heavier. This is *so cool.*

I thought I heard something over by the Floraldactyl.

They're closing in on me. Distraction, please!

I got you.

Comin' through!

THUMP

Hey, thanks for making us both heavier.

This is fun, right? Are you having fun?

÷Groannnn...÷

Thanks, Gabby!

Krakoa.

Nah. Haven't seen her.

Gabby either. They're both AWOL.

Too cool to hang with the rest of us.

I'm sure they're fine.

Yeah, probably. I just worry, you know?

You're looking for Cerebella and Scout?

I saw them going somewhere with Escapade.

I think they might've left Krakoa.

Thanks, Leo.

Okay, *now* I'm a little worried.

BRRNNG BRRNNG KLIK

Hey. What's up?

It's *speeding up!*

Hey Rahne. Is this an okay time to talk?

I'm slightly in the middle of something, Karma.

It's out of control!

We're worried about *Cerebella.*

She went somewhere off-island with Escapade and Scout.

Haven't seen them.

Grrrrr

Rahne... what was that noise?! Do you need any help?

Nah. Morgan and I have this covered, Dani.

We *do?*

I'm worried about Cerebella. Traumatized people make terrible decisions.

I know for *sure* Shela wouldn't do a heist without me.

I have to go.

"Traumatized people make terrible decisions" should be the New Mutants motto.

I want those words embroidered on a *throw pillow.*

Either these hench-warmers are weaksauce, or I'm getting better!

(Or both. Probably both.)

BLASTERDAME vs. SWEET WILLIAM!

I confess I detest violence, my dear.

Me too! Oh, this is great. Let's just work out a--

Alas, having been acculturated into a violent society and raised with toxic standards of male behavior, I must lament the necessity of mayhem.

PEW

PEW

PEW

You have a *choice!*

You can be *better!*

ZZZCK

Seriously.

Whew. I took down another one. I'm clearly the most profic--

Oh.

I got bored with the one-at-a-time thing.

Are refreshments going to be served? I could eat.

Show-off.

Five of you remain after combat trials: the Unicorn, Volga Belle, FistiCuss, BlasterDame and Skullbuster.

Got my eye on you.

Okey doke.

Please eat. I will meet with each of you alone. Starting with... ***BlasterDame.***

Uh, guys? Any time now--

Be right there.

I'm going to the bathroom. Don't eat all the spring rolls!

This decor is ***wild.***

BlasterDame. Tell me your story.

The best lie is the truth, right?

Um, when I was a kid, I decided to be a super villain. Didn't even know what it meant.

Finally! Get the cameras, quick!

Remember, ***don't go full rave.***

I'd better get back. Holler if you need anything.

They said I was *worthless*, I'd never be *anything*.

You have the recipe for *greatness*: ill treatment plus an indomitable will.

Emma Frost should take notes.

I just realized I don't--

--like enclosed spaces.

It's fine. I got this.

Some grappa?

Oh, I don't drink.

You really should *try* it.

Grappa is made from all of the stems, seeds, pulp and skins that are thrown away when we make wine.

This supposedly *worthless trash* becomes something... *exquisite*.

Oh wow. It's not just a drink, it's a *story*.

You can still pull the plug, Martha. We can walk away.

Wow, I identify with this booze so much!

PFFT

Oh, no. Grappa is rather a potent liqueur, over 100 proof.

Whaaaat?!

This better be the *bottom*.

Kill

There are cold cuts!

Kill

Is this seafood? Gonna find out.

Kill

I too have felt the scorn of cruel men. Some more?

Um, sure.

Hey, stop drinking!

Geez it's dark in here.

Good thing it's like a dessert wine. Practically no alcohol.

We're far enough away from those people. Time to get off.

Do you trust me?

You know, I think I *do*. I feel safe with you, even though I've only known you a short time.

In fact, you're probably the person I trust most, other than Shela--

Whoa!

ROAAARRRRR!!!

You could have just said *yes!*

cooooo

It's okay. You're okay. I know you're scared, but you're safe with us.

The cow, I mean the *count*. He's ready for another talk chat.

Cow count. *Heh.*

Shela, how much did you *drink?*

I recognize your voice now! You're gonna *pay.*

BVOOP BVOOP BVOOP

Oh no. I think I triggered an *alarm?*

We've got a situation here *too.*

Listen, we can talk--

Done talking. Time for *stabbing.*

Fight! Fight!

Do you need help, Cerebella?

BVOOP BVOOP BVOOP BVOOP BVOOP BVOOP

I can handle things here. Keep the Count busy.

Step away from the vault, dirtbag.

I'll keep Count Cringeula off your back.

VAULT ALARM

When two women fight, the patriarchy wins!

Shut up and die!

CRASH

What is happening in there?

Hey, Count. I'm *bored.*

Yes?

I'm sick of fighting *losers.* Let's throw down, you and me. *Right now.*

You wish to *die?* Very well, I *accept.*

Gotta turn this *around.* I messed up so bad.

Let's dance, your Countship.

SNI-

Get back here!

Gabby! I keep trying to swap with Skull--

What the--?

--buster. Oh no.

Escapade! You took my--

Oh, what. I have *claws?*

SNIKT

Give them back!

This heist is going *great* so far.

To be continued!

[new_mutants_[0.02]

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[kra_[0.0]...]
[koa_[0.0]...]

ZONE